DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 387 748 CG 026 528

AUTHOR Johnson, Wanda
TITLE Development of a Family Resource Directory for Employees of a Small Business.
PUB DATE 95
NOTE 48p.; Master's Practicum, Nova University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Careers; *Directories; *Employee Assistance Programs; Employer Attitudes; Employer Employee Relationship; Employment; Family Life; *Family Work Relationship; Fringe Benefits; Labor Relations; Work Environment

ABSTRACT

Driven by a competitive environment with other employers to maintain a quality workforce, businesses are increasingly becoming aware of the necessity to assist employees with programs and services regarding family needs. Unfortunately, most small to medium size companies are either ignorant of the necessity for family friendly services or lack the financial resources for providing such programs. A cost effective family oriented resource directory for the employees of a small business was designed and implemented. A post-distribution survey suggests employee satisfaction with a company initiated family oriented program, but future success and effectiveness will require continuous improvement and measurement. Appendixes contain the employee interest and needs survey, the proposed implementation plan, and the directory distribution survey. Contains 33 references. (Author/JBJ)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

CG

ED 387 748

DEVELOPMENT OF A FAMILY RESOURCE DIRECTORY FOR EMPLOYEES OF A SMALL BUSINESS

by

Wanda Johnson

Cohort 7F

A Practicum Report Presented to the
Master's Program in Life Span Care and Administration
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Science

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1995

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

W. Johnson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC).

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

2. Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

CG026528

AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in the hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

July 19, 1995
Date

Signature

ABSTRACT

Development of a Family Resource Directory for the employees of small business. Johnson, Wanda L., 1995: Practicum Report, Nova University, Master's Program in Life Span Care and Administration. Discriptors: Employer Assistance Programs / Family Benefits / Family Friendly Companies / Family Issues in the Workplace / Employer--Employee Relations.

Driven by a competitive environment with other employers to maintain a quality workforce, it is increasingly becoming a business necessity to assist employees with programs and services regarding family needs. Unfortunately, most small to medium size companies are either ignorant to the necessity for family friendly services or lack the financial resources for providing such programs.

The author designed and implemented a cost effective family oriented resource directory for the employees of a small business. A post-distribution survey suggests employee satisfaction with a company initiated family oriented program, but future success and effectiveness will require continuous improvement and measurement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I.	Introduction	5
	Background of the setting	5
	The setting in which the problem occurs	6
	The student's role in the setting	7
II.	The Problem	9
	Problem statement	9
	Documentation of the problem	9
	Analysis of the problem	13
III.	Goals and Objectives	18
IV.	Solution Strategy	19
	Existing programs, models and approaches	19
	Proposed Solution Strategy	24
V.	Strategy Employed -- Action Taken and Results	28
VI.	Conclusions -- Implications and Recommendations	34
References		36
Appendix A	Employee Interest and Needs Survey	40
Appendix B	Proposed Implementation Plan	42
Appendix C	Directory Distribution Survey	45

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Background of the setting

The project site was a material reclamation center, of which a major telecommunication company owns and operates, in Ashland, Virginia, a rural town north of Richmond. A small contract service provider, however, supplies the management and labor workforce for this reclamation facility. The needs and requirements of the telecommunication client determine the structure and operation of the workforce.

Overall functions of the center include the receiving, processing, dismantling, warehousing, shipping and selling of all recovered plant scrap material. The contractual agreement between the major telephone company and the service provider ranges from two to three years; at which time the expiring contract is either internally renegotiated or externally re-bid.

The contract provider employs approximately 150 employees in four geographically diverse centers, and represent three separate telecommunication clients. The centers are located in: Pennsylvania, Virginia, Texas and Tennessee. Employee numbers range from 22 to 45, and ethnicity is different and diverse in each facility. The Pennsylvania facility has a dominate Puerto Rican population with a Puerto Rican male manager; Virginia is primarily Afro-American with a Black female

manager; Texas supports a Mexican workforce and has a male Caucasian manager; and Tennessee has a mix of Afro-Americans, Laotians, Vietnamese, and Caucasians; and has a Black male manager."

The setting in which the problem occurs

Although, geographically, the Virginia facility was the most convenient location for the project facilitator, this bore little weight on its selection. This center was selected for the project for several reasons. First, the contract with the telecommunication client was recently renewed; which provides a climate of stability for the contract provider and the employees. Also, this particular client has historically demonstrated consistent support and encouragement in the service provider attempts to institute new ideas in the workplace. As a performance based partnership, maintaining a compatible relationship is important to our success.

Among all the centers, it ranks second in size with 32 employees; whom have all been trained in the principles of Total Quality Management (TQM). This has proven to be significant, especially when implementing new processes in the workplace. It aids in defining concepts of quality and prevention, and in establishing processes for problem solving and job performance. A ten year history has shown minimal employee turnover and a high level of adaptability.

Role in the Setting

This project was undertaken by the contract provider's TQM Training Facilitator. Although major operational changes require prior consultation with the Operations Vice President, the TQM Facilitator possesses ample authority in the change and innovation required to achieve overall organizational improvement.

Originally, the primary job requirements for this position involved evaluating the processes and systems of the company's infrastructure, and examining the work performances of the employees. After the initial evaluation, and its entailed management restructuring, it was necessary to train and supervise the entire workforce in problem solving and the implementation of TQM.

During these training sessions, proactive discussion integrated several work problems with family related issues. The principles and techniques of TQM lend themselves towards this task. For example, problems arising from employees non approved absenteeism resulted with time off for circumstances surrounding maternity, or the death of an immediate family member. Moreover, supervisors discussed and solved situations for dealing with drug screening and in securing support resources for reported instances of substance abuse.

Although the primary transitional training and implementation of TQM have been achieved, it is an on-going process that requires constant measuring and continuous improvement. For instance, current employee issues have dealt with employee medical and dental needs, and

other health related concerns, specifically lead and mercury containment and safety.

As the processes of TQM increasingly become an integral part of the corporate culture, the roles for accountability and leadership are shifting to the employees. This shift is altering the primary job requirements of the TQM facilitator from business restructuring, to other visionary pursuits. Realizing an employee's varied life roles and responsibilities; new job goals are designing and implementing initiatives that help employees balance work productivity and family needs.

CHAPTER TWO

The Problem

Problem Statement

To maintain a quality workforce in a highly competitive environment and in a global market, the employer must value diversity and individualism, and institute new programs and practices that align with the needs and preferences of its workforce. To accomplish this, a business must be willing to broaden its corporate paradigms, irregardless of its size, by evolving and expanding their family oriented programs and benefits.

This small business employer does offer, and substantially contributes, towards a comprehensive medical and dental plan, and does provides time off for maternity and the death of an immediate family member. However, the identified problem was that none of the warehouse facilities were exhibiting any progress towards improving its family resource program for the workforce.

Documentation of the Problem

Towards this goal, a feasibility survey (Appendix A) was administered to the Virginia facility to ascertain the interest and needs of its employees regarding family issues. Out of 39 total employees, 33 voluntarily responded a yes vote when asked if they would be interested

in a company sponsored family oriented program, and 35 employees responded to an itemized list of family needs and services. From the survey, there appeared to be an interest in and a need for an all-encompassing family information and service resource program.

Research strongly suggests a reciprocal relationship between work and family, with each setting influencing and spilling over into the other (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). Stress or satisfaction at work will have an impact on life outside work, and relationships at home will affect experiences at work Some studies attempt to demonstrate the effects of work on families (Crosby, 1982; Crouter,1984; Holder & Anderson, 1991), while other research data endeavor to show the effects of family life on work (Portner, 1978; Adams, 1993; Higgins, Duxbury & Lee, 1994).

Due to the interrelatedness of competition, demograghics and productivity, it is becoming a business liability in not recognizing the importance of family resource and benefit programs and their effect on work performance and commitment. Meeting the employee's needs for work and family has become a business necessity in the current competitive environment (Loden & Rosener, 1991; Harris, 1993). Driven by this need to be competitive, employers in both the public and the private sector are actively developing a wide range of family benefit initiatives (Delapp & Lawhorn, 1991; Guy, 1993).

Productivity measures a company's competitiveness, quality of products and reputation of service (Crosby, 1984). The current level of

American worker's productivity is growing less than half as fast as it did in the quarter century after World War II (Aguayo, 1990). Employers must face the reality that work and family are not separate anymore, and that family issues play a large role in work productivity (Cooper & Lewis, 1994).

Another need for a paradigm shift emphasizing family policy within our business community is due to changing employee demographics. Today's workforce is dramatically different from the workforce of the past, particularly its diversity in: age, lifestyles, culture, values, dual incomes, and the increased participation of women, specifically mothers (Martinez, 1993; Holder et al., 1993). The decline of birth rate in the 1970s will decrease the supply of younger employees, traditionally white male; thereby intensifying the recruiting and the competitive efforts of businesses. As a result, companies will need to adjust to accommodate to a diverse and complex workforce of women, immigrants, ethnic minorities, ages, and values. For example, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (1989, August) predicts that by the year 2000, women will account for more than 47% of the total workforce, and 61% of all American women will be employed.

A competitive advantage and challenge lie in maximizing the talents of employees who can offer different resources and perspectives; while recognizing their individual interests and needs (Shellenbarger, 1993). It is the human factor in productivity that is subtle and difficult to ascertain. For instance, family-concern induced stress is an enemy of

productivity in the workplace (Cooper et al., 1994). Fernandez (1991) found that 77% of the women surveyed, with children under 18, deal with family issues during working hours, and 48% admitted spending unproductive time at work because of child-care concerns.

Women think about family matters more than men, thereby increasing the possibility of feeling both guilty and stressed (Shellenbarger, 1992; Cooper et al., 1994). Whereas men attempt to experience dual roles sequentially, women experience them simultaneously (Hall,1971; Holder et al., 1993). Although there is a growing awareness in shared parenting, the burden of responsibility for child care is still on the mother, and she remains the primary caretaker of the children (Cooper et al, 1994). Furthermore, women are also the primary caregiver for elderly relatives. The middle-aged working woman is caught between caring for their children and their parents (McGoldrick, 1991).

Flexibility appears to be the employer's and the employee's word of choice when examining and responding to the diverse and individual needs of the employee. Business competitiveness in the local and international market is realizing the value of flexible benefits plans in recruiting and retaining employees (Shellenbarger, 1992; Adams, 1993; Murray, 1994; Crouter & Manke, 1994; Cooper et al., 1994). The adoption of a flexible benefits plan gives an employee the opportunity to custom-tailor a benefits package that fits their individual needs. Flexibility offers employees more control over their working hours,

thereby lessening family stress and improving job concentration and work performance (Cooper et al., 1994).

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration (1990), small businesses of fewer than 100 employees employ more than one-half or 55% of all American workers. Employers of fewer than 25 persons provide jobs for 26% of the workforce, and 44% of these employees are women. Larger companies with an employee size of 1000 or more comprise only 13% of the workforce industry.

In its May 1985 publication, the Small Business Administration reported that a small business' ability to attract and maintain a quality workforce directly relates to the benefits it offers. Work benefits, including those privileges related to family issues, are inextricably tied to the size of the company. Adams (1993), states, "Because their (small companies) resources can be more limited than those of large corporations, they often cannot afford to extend greater benefits and flexibility to workers" (p.126). A small business' size hinders its ability to pursue individual benefits. Although this is a major obstacle for smaller businesses, the reason for them to concern themselves with family-related issues are the same as large companies -- competition (Crosby, 1984; Jamieson & O'Mara, 1991).

Analysis of the Problem

As a topic among the business community, family resource and service programs are a relatively new interest concern that is not

discussed as a fad, but, instead, as a business tool associated with the cost of doing business (Murray, 1994). The increasing necessity to adopt an effective policy to balance work and family life is not likely to fade anytime too soon. Reorganizing the workplace so that it can successfully compete in a competitive market, while providing personal growth and family support for its employees, is a major venture confronting American employers.

Analyzing the problem from a business perspective, the primary motivation for expanding the boundaries of its responsibility is simple -- the bottom line. A business' financial health requires skilled workers, retention, positive public image, low absenteeism and high employee morale. In today's market, business productivity stems from two interdependent pressures: the pending American skilled labor shortage, and the employee's need for employer flexibility to adequately balance family and job responsibilities.

Boyett and Conn (1991) anticipate a radical change in the American workplace. Due to accelerated local and global competition, large companies will continue to downsize, thereby creating smaller, specialized businesses. As a result of this restructuring, most Americans will find themselves working in a small company environment. This is noteworthy, especially when considering the limitations that business size engenders. Regardless the validity of this picture, American businesses are currently undergoing a critical fundamental transformation. Whether knowingly or unconsciously, it is exacting a

change in attitudes and expectations, particularly in the traditionally held belief for separation of work and family.

There is mounting and encouraging evidence that companies are realizing the good business sense for adopting family policies. Julie Setzer (1995) from Work/Family Directions, a national organization that offer corporations the services, products and skills needed to meet the challenges of the changing workforce, recognizes an increase for her expertise and service product. As previously stated, by the year 2000, companies will experience a skilled labor shortage. This being the situation, all businesses, irrespective of their size, must begin positioning themselves to maximize this limited resource.

Recruiting and retaining employees are requiring more than a weekly pay check. Business managers are needing creative incentives in these efforts. A good business approach for the individual and family needs of the employee is determining what the employee wants, what they can use, and what is workable. Since business managers are requiring creative incentives for recruitment, and employees are requiring innovative programs for individual needs, why not create a "partnership of requirements"?

An employer must value differences and diversity and use them advantageously (Crosby, 1984). For example, the number of women in the workforce with young children will continue to increase, and the ability of the employer to alleviate stress caused by family concerns will be a factor in maintaining a high level of productivity. This being the

case, the state of California discovered employees who work from home, caring for their children, were 3% to 5% more effective than if working in the office (Delapp & et al., 1991).

Companies wanting to improve its competitive position in the global market must emphasis a skilled workforce, and embrace diversity. Family benefits programs will improve recruitment and retention, decrease absenteeism, improve morale and public image. The question then, if family benefits policy is so advantageous, why are not more businesses getting on the bandwagon? According to Julie Setzer (1995) of Work/Family Directions Inc., cost and business size are the two dominate causes on why companies do not offer family benefits.

Coincidentally, these are the same reasons why the service provider has been unable to expand its family assisted programs. As the earlier literature reported regarding small businesses, budgetary restraints limit the feasibility for benefits expansion, and for qualified, on-site personnel. Moreover, the possibility exists that a client will not renew the contract, thereby making it unrealistic to design, develop, implement and finance a substantive family related resource program. Unfortunately, the possibility of the new service contractor maintaining and supporting this endeavor would be highly unlikely.

Also due to a small workforce, family related concerns are sporadic and individual. Currently, family concerns and problems are handled based on the immediate urgency and needs of the individual. Although this approach does have merit, it sometimes fails to provide any far

reaching support for the employees, individually or collectively. The service contract employer lacks the employee numbers to justify hiring or inviting family related resource personnel. Furthermore, prevention is a cornerstone to the TQM philosophy, and as the TQM facilitator, a program that stresses prevention rather than intervention would be preferable.

CHAPTER THREE

Goals and Objectives

Goals and Objectives

Analysis of the literature suggests that due to global competition, employee productivity, and an increasing complex and diverse workforce, there exists a need for business organizations, irrespective of size, to continually develop family service programs. The project setting had no all-encompassing family resource program for its employees. Therefore, the goal of this project was to develop a family oriented resource program for the Virginia facility.

Based on this goal, objectives were as follows:

(1) To design and implement a family resource program within an established cost parameter.

(2) To encourage partnerships with public and private community resources evidenced by their involvement in the family resource program.

(3) To measure the value of a family benefits program with a post-distribution employee survey evaluation.

CHAPTER FOUR

Solution Strategy

Review of existing programs, models, and approaches

Family resource programs within a business context are very similar to family resource programs within a social service paradigm. Common ground to all family resource programs is providing access for support and information; and thereby possess several distinguishing characteristics.

(1) They are prevention oriented, and serve to empower the individual.

(2) They strive to create a healthy environment.

(3) They are available as a community resource that provides referrals to other public and private agencies.

(4) They encourage the involvement of community partnerships, and empower the capabilities of the individual.

(5) They provide for flexibility to meet changing needs.

Powell (1988) suggests that emerging models for family service programs focus on individualizing needs, empowering the individual, and strengthening social networks and community ties. As developing social service oriented family programs represent a response to diverse family needs, business oriented benefits represent an organizational response to a demographically changing workforce.

Presently, employees view many benefits, such as social security, holiday leave and health, as entitlements. Modifying the old, and creating new types of benefits will, eventually, also become a standard form of compensation (Selbert, 1988). Robin Hardman (1995) from The Families and Work Institute, a non profit organization that serves as a clearinghouse and center for policy research on work and family life, echoes this sentiment. She observes family centered benefit programs as becoming more mainstream in the business culture because employees are either expecting or demanding them. Family centered benefits and programs are becoming more common because of increased corporate awareness in the changing demographics of the workforce (McCaffery, 1988).

Generally, benefits fall into three main, but overlapping, categories:

(1) mandated benefits, i.e., social security, workman comp.

(2) time-oriented benefits, i.e., holidays, vacation, maternity leave

(3) supplementary benefits, i.e., medical, pensions, family.

Topics normally associated with family benefits include: dependent (child and elder) care support, flextime, adoption assistance, substance abuse counseling, budgeting consultation, family emergency leave, housing and relocation assistance, education, and employee assistance programs. The most popular focus area involves dependent support; specifically, child related issues such as preschool day care, emergency care, and before and after school programs.

Historically, employers offered employees a predetermined and firm package of benefits and programs. This concept of "one plan fits all" manifested the unrealistic view that their employees all possessed and experienced the same family needs or concerns. This particular viewpoint also exemplifies the traditional social service agency who offered to all their clients a rigid family program that characterized only white, middle-class values.

In contrast, flexibility and choice determine today's delivery system for both social service programs and employee benefits. The cafeteria or flex approach offers the employee a choice, or menu, of benefits to characterize their unique needs, values and lifestyle (Rosenbloom & Hallman, 1986; McCaffery, 1988; Morgan & Tucker, 1991; Jenks & Zevnik, 1993).

From a business perspective, the flex or cafeteria approach balances financial cost-control goals with those that address human resource needs. It expands the scope of the benefits package and introduces the process of employee choice. Although cost is a major component in program design and development, this approach does not, necessarily, increase the employer's direct costs for benefits.

Most small to medium size companies structure their cafeteria plan from five basic models: a reimbursement account, an add-on plan, mix and match options, a core carve-out plan or a modular plan (McCaffery, 1988; Jenks & Zevnik, 1993). Briefly summarized:

(1) A reimbursement account -- a popular evolving arrangement that allows employees to fund individual accounts (i.e., legal, child or elder care) with untaxed money. Unfortunately, it is subject to Internal Revenue Codes, Section 125 and 129, that dictate a year-end "use it or lose it" regulation, and prohibits employees from transferring funds from differing accounts to pay expenses. Corning Glass, Proctor and Gamble and Wells Fargo Bank exemplify companies who use this approach.

(2) An additional allowance plan -- introduced in 1974 by the Educational Testing Service, provided a basic benefits program, with opportunities for employees to select benefits with earned credits. If the costs of the supplemented benefits exceed earned credits, the employee can pay the difference through payroll or salary reductions.

(3) Mix and match option -- introduced by TRW Systems Group in 1974 whose employees had an opportunity to shift levels of coverage within a predetermined benefits package. Lowering levels of coverage in one area increased coverage in another area, or converted into cash.

(4) A core carve-out plan -- launched in 1978 by American Can, and used by the service contract employer, is a two part plan that includes a fixed core of benefits and a menu of option items. These option item benefits are generated after having "carved-out" the fixed benefits.

(5) A modular plan -- first adopted by Northern Telecom in 1982, whose individual employees selected a module from a prepackaged flex plan consisting of a number of modules. Each module covered the same types of benefits but with varying levels of coverage. The number of modules in a plan is largely a function of the diversity of employee needs.

Due to cost, many of these plans network with specific service providers. Larger companies, with readily available resources, are more comprehensive and incorporate a combination of these standard designs.

Robin Hardman (1995) suggests that smaller organizations perceive the need for and the types of family centered benefits differently than larger companies. Analogous to a small town, everyone tends to know everyone's "business" in a small workplace environment. The smaller company usually operates more informally, with less bureaucracy, and negotiates family issues on a case-by-case basis. They utilize cross training methods, where employees train and know more than one work function; and develop partnership teams. In this way, colleagues readily absorb job responsibilities, and employees have greater flexibility to balance work and family commitments.

Finally, partnerships go beyond employee camaraderie when concerning family benefits programs. They provide a bilateral exchange of support, that are both internally structured and externally negotiated. Community collaboration is a small business alternative to defraying start-up and operating costs in family benefits programs. Partnerships

can provide a small business an opportunity to create a special place to be, instead of just a place to work.

Proposed solution strategy

As the literature suggests, there exist a variety of program models to support the employees' diverse lifestyles and family needs in determining a strategy for a family resource program in a business organization. Within the context of this selection, the organization's financial constraints were also discussed. As previously stated, this is often the reason organizations fall short when preparing an employee benefits package, specifically, family oriented programs.

A targeted goal in this project was to develop a cost effective family oriented resource program that would help bridge the gap between work and family responsibilities. The employer had already carved out a basic structure of mandatory and time-off oriented benefits, and was striving to develop a menu of optional supplementary items. Although monetary resources were limited due to company size, management remained committed to improving its current family benefits package.

In keeping with the company's current core plan and in realizing the project's overall goal, the strategy for an optional supplementary item was to design and develop a comprehensive family resource directory. Details pertaining to the solution strategy such as objectives, techniques and activities, responsible members, costs, and a completion timeline are outlined in Appendix B of this report.

The main stipulations from top management were that the program be as comprehensive as possible in content and maintain agreed upon cost controls. It was proposed that a family resource directory would effectively function as an employer support for employees solving personal problems, and it would also be an efficient structure in terms of overall costs.

Underlying this strategy was the recognition that work can never be fully separated from the rest of one's life. There remains, however, a fine line between employer assistance and employer interference when becoming involved in employees' private family issues. It was determined that a resource directory would empower an employee in issues requiring privacy, or when used as a reference tool for individual needs. In this way, it would empower an employee in making informed choices concerning private family matters, reduce stress, and enhance job effectiveness and productivity, while limiting direct employer interference.

Beyond the normal breadth of such a program, it was concluded that a well-designed directory would satisfy a multiple of purposes. At a minimum, it would be an economical way for a small business to be sensitive and supportive of its employees' family concerns. In this way an employee could perceive their workplace as a source of family coping resources rather than just as a source of work-related demands.

It was determined that a directory would offer the employee a chose when selecting from a reliable instrument of qualified private practices and public agencies. A family oriented directory would provide

a one-stop listing of names, addresses, telephone numbers, and other pertinent data of specific services, fees, and hours. This information would enable the employee an opportunity to preview and examine relevant private and public resources for their individual needs, concerns and interests.

Moreover, a resource directory would encourage community partnerships by making organizations aware of our employees, and by making the employees aware of specific community services and resources. Promoting cooperation among community members would enhance the delivery of support by establishing the initial contact, pre-negotiating payment scales, and in facilitating the capabilities of the community's social service resources...in simpler terms, it would encourage prevention, intervention, and would pave the way for the employee.

It was also proposed that three key components would decide program success. First was the willingness, or lack of, community collaboration. It would be important to locate and to effectively communicate with public and private representatives when collecting data and in determining credibility and competency. State regulatory and licensing agencies, and referrals from reliable networking associations would aid in establishing the legitimacy and qualifications of individuals and organizations.

Second, employer commitment would determine program probability. Attitudes of people that hold managerial and decision

making positions would be critical in supporting the notion of family programs within the workplace, let alone the implementation of such. Even partnerships that could be a reasonable alternative to defraying start-up and operating costs for a small business required the advocacy of the CEO.

Finally, an evaluative instrument demonstrating directory value and identifying other areas of need would be designed to measure program effectiveness and areas for improvement. Although a follow-up survey within a ten week implementation plan would measure the directory's apparent value, or popularity quotient, a longer period of perhaps a year would be required before measuring its true value. Directory value would be evidenced by employee use, or lack of, and would determine program continuation. It was also decided that present and future assessments should include a companion section whose objective was to locate other service areas of need for continued family benefits development.

CHAPTER FIVE

Strategy Employed

Action Taken and Results

As previously demonstrated, a resource directory was developed for the employees of a small warehouse facility to fulfill the project's goal in providing a family oriented program. Significant changes were not required between the proposed and the actual implementation plans. Implementation results are as follows in relationship with the proposed objectives:

(1) **To design and implement a family resource program within an established cost parameter.**

Although top management did not require "convincing" to support a family oriented program, they did require instruction as to the possible results or associated effects such a program might have concerning employee hiring, retention, absenteeism and productivity. Since the crux of the business is providing labor, this project provided an experimental method for providing a family oriented benefit in an increasingly competitive market.

Unknown during the implementation of the project was the impact it would have on future contract bidding. For example, two bid packages of considerable size and scope were received shortly after distribution of the directory. Amongst their requirements, the clients requested a list of employee benefits that the bidder would provide. The service provider

has enhanced their position as a strong, competitive leader in the industry by possessing the ability to demonstrate a knowledge of and an awareness for: the personal lives of the workforce in relationship to productivity, the value of partnerships, and the service requirements of the client.

As previously mentioned, success of the project, especially one that was experimental, would require management support, and must be cost effective. Being educated to the possibilities of the project's good business sense does not alleviate all of the unidentified fears, especially when related to expenses. The importance of costs was underscored with concerns that a new program would be, or become, cost prohibitive. A discussion with the Vice President of Operations yielded a budget of $250.^{99}$ (excluding the cost of the program facilitator's hourly time commitment from lost productivity in normal work). Expenses the employer committed to the directory were those associated with:

(1) lost productivity in normal work activities due to project time commitment

(2) directory publication

(3) additional long distance phone calls

By performing most of the mechanics associated with producing a directory, the final cost amounted to 20% under budget. However, not possessing prior knowledge with the construction or technical activities associated with designing a directory; it is this author's opinion that the

saved 20% should have gone towards this purpose. Time spent in learning printing and editing skills could have been used elsewhere.

(2) **To encourage partnerships with public and private community resources.**

Most of the project's efforts devoted to locating and selecting qualified public and private agencies was the result of two main reasons. First, an unexpected consequence was the difficulty of not residing within the area of the business, nor being an active member of the that community. This had been drastically underestimated in its significance. Next, public agencies and private business are often in competition with each other, thereby creating minimal cooperation when asking for referrals. It therefore became necessary to approach both areas, public and private, from different perspectives.

Gathering data from public agencies proved less difficult than obtaining information from private resources. A portion of the warehouse facility is used by a State operated mental health organization, which aided in getting a foot in the door regarding regulated and controlled public assisted agencies. Also, due to being "public" or tax supported, many of these agencies are readily listed in the telephone directory under social services.

Generally, agency directors and supervisors were helpful and cooperative when discussing their particular function, but, interestingly, were less knowledgeable concerning other public agencies, and offered no information regarding private enterprises. Perhaps the lack of interest

concerning other public agencies resulted from of internal competition for grant money and tax dollars.

The search for private business ventures provided a greater challenge, and required investigative and organized planning beginning with the Chamber of Commerce and Hanover County City Planning and Development. Communication with several reputable business associations yielded positive referrals, including both public agencies and private ventures. Most business owners and managers were knowledgeable and cooperative in sharing information regarding their particular expertise, competitive businesses and public agencies. Verifying credentials was easily accomplished through licensing agencies and consumer advocacy associations.

(3) **To measure the value of a family benefits program with an employee survey evaluation.**

Advice from our warehouse Manager suggested keeping the survey relatively short and simple to maximize the number of employee responses. The workforce is 94% Black and 6% Caucasian, whose average age is 34 years old. These workers are predominately male (12 women, 23 men), with some high school education. Unfortunately, the survey did not include the gender of the respondent. A more detailed survey profiling the employee would have been useful.

During distribution of the directory, the facility had 35 employees (Copy of the Directory is supplied in Appendix D). It was delivered to thirty-one (31) employees on Tuesday (3 employees were sick, and one

employee was on vacation), along with the employee survey (See Appendix C). They were asked to return the questionnaire on Friday, thus allowing 3 full days to examine the booklets.

Survey response rate was 84%, or 26 employees. Again, survey knowledge of the respondent's gender would have been useful to ascertain gender related interests and concerns regarding family issues. Preliminary results, as illustrated in Table 5.1, indicate an overall (92%) employee satisfaction with, and appropriateness of the directory. Most popular areas of the directory were availability of addresses and phone numbers (54%), the range of topics (38%), and the addition of public agencies (35%).

Conversely, the least favorite part of the directory was the inclusion of private business at 38%. One can only guess that because private business is not always an inexpensive or a free social resource, commonly referred to nor familiar sounding, it is less likely to be known about or recognized for its benefits. A distant second least liked section (15%) was the asterisked comments regarding fees, hours, specific services rendered, etc. Majority (92%) of the respondents would not change the directory; and although 2 employees would change it, unfortunately, they did not indicate what or how.

Table 5.1 Preliminary results of the Directory

Questions	Responses
Q1 -- This directory will:	
Be very helpful	13
Be somewhat helpful	11
Not be helpful	2
Q2 -- I think it is _____ for my workplace to provide me a family oriented resource directory.	
Appropriate	24
Inappropriate	2
Q3 -- The part(s) of the directory that I like best:	
Range of topics	10
Addresses and telephone	14
* Comments	6
Public agencies	9
Private agencies	7
Readability	5
Other	1
Q4 -- The part(s) of the directory that I like least:	
Range of topics	1
Addresses and telephone	2
* Comments	4
Public agencies	3
Private agencies	10
Readability	1
Other	1
Q5 -- Additions or deletions that you would make:	
No change	24
Changes	2

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions

Implications and Recommendations

Preliminary findings for this project provide support that business leaders, can, and should, institute family oriented programs within the workplace. Results indicate that positive leadership attitudes, outside partnerships and cost controls are associated with a successful family oriented resource program.

Project collaboration and leadership support are essential in carrying out the business mission and philosophy that reflect the interdependance of the work and family relationship. Due to the supporting demographic need for this new business attitude, research must be performed to accurately reflect these changing values. Moreover, conscientious dissemination of ideas aimed at informing and educating decision-making personnel will enhance the design and implementation of family oriented programs.

The greatest obstacle became one of geographic distance between project facilitator and the Virginia facility. Working and living in the same area would be an important consideration for the next facility directory. Although partnerships were established in the community, external to the workplace, future family oriented programs would also benefit from partnering within the workplace.

Visionary pursuits might include ways of designing and forming mutually beneficial partnerships between companies desiring and needing to develop family oriented services and resources. This project suggests that private business seem to have a better sense for the need of partnerships than do public agencies. It also implies that current government funding hinders cooperation and resourcefulness between public agencies.

Finally, employees should be encouraged to participate in activities that (1) are intended for them, and (2) directly effect them. Although this directory included life cycle topics relevant to all ethnicity's, employee input from each of the facilities would enhance and individualize the directory to fit specific interests, concerns and needs of that geographic location.

A follow-up, or companion survey should be administered within one year to determine the real value of the directory, and to ascertain the future direction for family related programs. Follow-up data should measure employee productivity in relationship to reduced levels of stress due to perceived and real employer support of family oriented issues. Like other business systems in the Total Quality Management philosophy, family oriented services and programs should become a continuous improvement process.

REFERENCES

Adams, J.L. (1993, December). Juggling job and family: making it work at work. Vital Speeches, 60, 125-128.

Aguayo, R. (1990). Dr. Deming: The American who taught the Japanese about quality. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Boyett, J.H. & Conn, H.P. (1991). Workplace 2000. New York: Penguin Group.

Cooper, C.L. & Lewis, S. (1994). Managing the new work force: the challenge of dual income families. Englewood, NJ: Pfeiffer & Company.

Crosby, F.J. (1982). Relative deprivation and working women. New York: Oxford University Press.

Crosby, P.B. (1984). Quality without tears: The art of hassle free management. New York: McGraw Hill.

Crouter, A.C. (1984). Spillover from family to work: The neglected side of the work-family interface. Human Relations, 37, 425-442.

Crouter, A.C. & Manke, B. (1994, April). The changing American workplace: Implications for individuals and families. Family Relations, 43, 117-123.

Delapp, L. & Lawhorn, S. (1991, August). Family Benefits in the California Workplace: The California family policy and benefits study. California State Legislature, Assembly Office of Research: Sacramento.

Fernandez, J.P. (1986). Child care and corporate productivity, resolving family/work conflicts. New York: Lexington Books, D.C. Heath & Co.

Guy, Mary E. (1993, May/June). Workplace productivity and gender issues. Public Administration Review, 53, 279-282.

Hall, D.T. (1971). A model of coping with role conflict: The role behavior of college educated women. Administrative Science Quarterly, 1, 471-487.

Hardman, R. (1995, January). Telephone interview. New York: The Work and Family Institute.

Harris, Diane (1993, June). Big Business takes on child care. Working Woman, 18, 50-51.

Higgins, C. & Duxbury, L. & Lee, C. (1994, April). Impact of life-cycle stage and gender on the ability to balance work and family responsibilities. Family Relations, 43, 144-150.

Holder, D.P. & Anderson, C.M. (1991). Women, work, and the family. In M. McGoldrick, C. Anderson & F. Walsh (Eds.), Women in Families: A framework for family therapy. New York: NY. pp. 357-380.

Jamieson, D. & O'Mara, J. (1991). Managing workforce 2000. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Jenks, J.M. & Zevnik, B.L. (1993). Employee benefits, plain and simple. New York: Macmillan.

Loden, M. & Rosener, J.B. (1991). Workforce America. Homewood, IL: Business One Irwin Publisher.

Martinez, M.N. (1993, January). Family support make business sense. HR Magazine, 38, 38-43.

McCaffery, R.M. (1988). Employee Benefit Programs: A total compensation perspective. Boston, MA: PWS-Kent.

McGoldrick, M. (1991). Women through the family life cycle. In M. McGoldrick, C. Anderson & F. Walsh (Eds.), Women in Families: A framework for family therapy. (pp. 200 - 226). New York: NY.

Morgan, H. & Tucker, K. (1991). Companies that care. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Murray, M. (1994, May). How fair are work-family programs?. Working Woman, 13.

Portner,J. (1978). Impacts of work on the family. Minnesota Council on Family Relations.

Powell, D. (!988). Parent Education as Early Childhood Intervention. Nowood, NJ: Ablex.

Rosenbloom, J.S. & Hallman, G.V. (1986). Employee Benefit Planning. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Selbert, R. (1988, September 26). Benefits growth. Future Scan, newsletter, p. 1.

Setzer, Julie. (1995, January). Telephone interview. Chicago: Work/Family Directions Inc.

Shellenbarger, S. (1992, Fall). Lessons from the workplace: how corporate policies and attitudes lag behind workers' changing needs. Human Resource Management, 31, 157-169.

U.S. Small Business Administration. (1990). The state of small business. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

U.S. Small Business Administration. (1985, May). Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Zedeck, S. & Mosier, K.L. (1990). Work in the Family and Employing organizations. American Psychologist, 45, 240-251.

APPENDIX A

Employee Interests and Needs Survey

Employee Interest and Needs Survey

This is a short survey to determine your interests and needs for a Family Benefits Program. After completing it, please return it to your manager.

THIS SURVEY IS FOR GATHERING INFORMATION ONLY -- **DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME.**

Are you male_____ female_____

Would be be interested in a family centered program that provided you with services and information concerning family issues? yes_____ no_____

If yes, what topics in particular would be of interest to you (check as many as you like)

abortion___
adoption___
alcohol & drug abuse___
career___
child abuse___
child care___
childhood development___
divorce___
education___
elder care___
family law___
health___
marriage___
mental health___
parenting___
pregnancy___
homosexuality___
hospice care___
religion___
sex___
spousal abuse___
step-families___
teen issues___
work___

other(s)_____

_____

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX B

Proposed Implementation Plan

Ten week calender plan for implementation activities

Program Development, Organization, Distribution and Evaluation

Objectives and activities must be performed in sequence, from locating resource and support people, to organizing and publishing the directory, to directory distribution and employee response evaluation.

(A) Objective -- to develop a list of family-centered topics.

(1) Activity -- to research family based programs for relevant issues

Responsible person -- practicum student

Time -- 2 hours

(B) Objective -- to research and solicit credible private practices and public agencies through licensing and consumer regulated agencies.

(1) Activity -- to telephone Chamber of Commerce, Department of Economic Development, our client, etc., for the names of community leaders in the city and county.

Responsible person -- practicum student

Time -- 3 days

(2) Activity -- to write, telephone and meet with the gathered resource people, to write articles for distribution in local business newsletters

Responsible person -- practicum student

Time -- 6 weeks

(C) Objective -- to develop a directory

(1) Activity -- to compile data of persons and agencies, and correlate them to family topic.

Responsible person -- practicum student

Time -- 1 week

(2) Activity -- to create a directory prototype for publication

Responsible person -- practicum student

Time -- 2 weeks

(3) Activity -- to publish a directory

Responsible person -- practicum student

Time -- 1 week

(D) Objective -- to distribute a directory, and to measure employee response

(1) Activity -- to distribute a directory and a response survey to every employee

Responsible person -- practicum student

Time -- 2 days

(2) Activity -- to identify and examine follow-up areas of services and needs for other program design

Responsible person -- practicum student

Time -- to be determined

APPENDIX C

Directory Distribution Survey

DIRECTORY SURVEY

After you have had time to review your new directory, we would appreciate your opinion for future considerations.

(1) This directory will:

- ☐ be very helpful
- ☐ be somewhat helpful
- ☐ probably not be very helpful

(2) I think it is (☐ appropriate ☐ inappropriate) **for my workplace to provide me with a family oriented service directory.**

(3) The part(s) of the directory that I like <u>best</u> (check all that apply):

- ☐ the range of topic areas
- ☐ the presence of addresses and phone numbers
- ☐ * comments regarding fees, services, etc.
- ☐ inclusion of public agencies
- ☐ inclusion of private businesses
- ☐ readability of the directory's format
- ☐ other parts of the directory _____

_____

(4) The part(s) of the directory that I like <u>least</u> (check all that apply):

- ☐ the range of topic areas
- ☐ the presence of addresses and phone numbers
- ☐ * comments regarding fees, services, etc.
- ☐ inclusion of public agencies
- ☐ inclusion of private businesses
- ☐ readability of the directory's format
- ☐ other parts of the directory _____

_____

(5) **Additions or deletions that you would make:**

☐ no change

☐ _____

_____

Please return to Diana by Friday. Thank you.